

STATE OF MICHIGAN

Family
Independence
Agency

August 2001

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Director's Recognition Program

Twenty FIA employees honored during June 28 ceremony

The third Director's Recognition Program awards were presented to Family Independence Agency employees June 28.

At that time, 20 FIA employees received inscribed plaques and recognition before FIA administrators, county and district office directors at an event held at Lansing's Holiday Inn South.

The Director's Recognition Program—formerly known as the Employee Recognition Program—recognizes outstanding employees throughout the FIA who were nominated by peers for their outstanding job performance and community participation.

It is one of four programs that constitute the FIA Employee Recognition Program. The others are the T. E. A. M. Award, Quick Hits and Quality Recognition System, all administered by the FIA Office of Reengineering and Quality Management. FIA Office of Communications administers the Director's Recognition Program.

For a review of this year's honorees and what their nominators said about them, see the recaps beginning on page 4.

■ **Publication 870, a new brochure about the Director's Recognition Program, can be ordered from warehouse.**



“Lisa’s law” passed by Legislature, signed by governor

New state laws provide training for FIA workers doing home calls Others make it a felony to impersonate or assault an FIA worker

The Michigan Legislature, Family Independence Agency, UAW Local 6000 and Governor's Office joined forces in adopting a new set of state laws referred to as “Lisa’s law.”

Spurred by the 1998 death of Macomb County FIA protective services worker Lisa Putman, the legislation requires the Family Independence Agency to provide training for specialists and workers making home calls and makes it a crime to impersonate, threaten or harm an FIA employee.

In consultation with Michigan State Police, an agency safety review was conducted after Ms. Putman's death. It was State Police advice that, for non-law enforcement workers, the most effective safety strategy is being able to conduct investigations in a safe manner, appropriately assess any danger, and being able to diffuse the threatening behavior. “Lisa’s law” was developed to address the recommendations made by Michigan State Police.

Under HB 4099 ([Public Act 14, effective Sept. 1](#)) the FIA must develop, implement and provide training to each employee who is required to do a field investigation or home visit. The



Lisa Putman

continues on next page

Lisa's law *continues from page 1*

training must include instruction on defusing threatening behavior and how to perform a safe investigation or home visit and how to recognize a potentially dangerous situation.

The law requires that if an employee has a documented risk that leads to a reasonable apprehension that a field investigation or home visit is not safe, the employee must take an appropriately trained FIA employee or law enforcement officer with him or her. The law complements current FIA policy where an employee may request a “buddy” visit.

The governor also signed two other bills that criminalize threatening, assaulting or impersonating an FIA worker.

SB 73 ([Public Act 21, effective Sept. 1](#)) makes it a felony to impersonate an FIA employee with intent to:

- Gain or attempt to gain entry to a residence or other property.
- Remain or attempt to remain in a residence or other property.
- Commit or attempt to commit a crime.
- Gain or attempt to gain access to financial account information.
- Obtain or attempt to obtain confidential Child Protective Services information.
- Gain access or attempt to gain access to a person less than 18 years of age or a vulnerable adult.

SB 72 ([Public Act 22, effective Sept. 1](#)) amends the state Penal Code making it a misdemeanor to threaten to physically harm an FIA employee if the threat is based on the person's status as an FIA employee. In addition, the bill makes it a felony to assault (or assault and batter) an FIA employee causing physical injury while the employee is performing his or her work duties and because of the employee's status as an FIA worker. The new law also makes it a felony if the assault or assault and battery causes the FIA employee serious impairment of a body function.

Penalties for these crimes can range from imprisonment of 1-5 years and/or fines of \$1,000-\$5,000 or combinations of both.

■ **Lansing-based Gongwer News Service and FIA Office of Legislative Liaison bill analysis contributed to this story.**

Intercepted letters

To: Zone 3 County Directors

Date: June 25, 2001

Subj: Isabella County director

I am pleased to announce the appointment of Donna O'Grady as the new Isabella County FIA director. O'Grady has 27 years experience in FIA, most recent as acting director of Gratiot County. Prior to that...she led statewide efforts for implementation of Project Zero and Food Stamp error reduction efforts including establishment and implementation of the Technical Assistance Team efforts. In addition to her FIA assignments O'Grady serves on a number of community boards including Crawford County United Way, River House Shelter for Domestic Violence Center, Camp Grayling Minuteman Foundation and Grayling Township Compensation Board.

[Kathryn McDonald](#), Manager

FIA Zone 3 Office, Lansing

To: FIA director Douglas Howard

Date: May 25, 2001

Subj: Diversity in the Agency

I am so pleased to see this level of commitment to such a valuable philosophy of inclusion in the work arena. If I can be of any assistance to you please do not hesitate to call upon me.

[Sherry Thomas-Cloud](#), Director

Kalamazoo County Family Independence Agency, Kalamazoo

To: FIA director Douglas Howard

Date: May 24, 2001

Subj: Diversity in the Agency

Your memo regarding Diversity in the Agency is appreciated. We need to be reminded of the strength in our differences, and how those differences can be collective in helping us achieve our goals as a team. Thanks for the reminder and for making it a part of the strategic plan for our agency.

[Cheryl L. Nebedum](#)

Muskegon County Family Independence Agency, Muskegon

■ The director's memo, *Diversity in the Agency*, is available on the FIA-Net under "Employee Information" by clicking on "Misc. Other Information".

To: Executive Council

Date: May 10, 2001

Subj: Quality Control and Special Projects

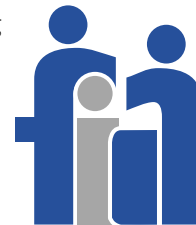
I am pleased to announce that Sandra Norton has been appointed acting director of the FIA Office of Quality Control and Special Projects, effective May 14. Sandy has been with FIA for over 30 years. She began in Ingham County as an AFDC caseworker. She has been in Quality Control and Special Projects for over 25 years, beginning as a corrective action specialist and later as the supervisor of the corrective action unit. She is currently supervisor of quality support, which includes the program data analysis and TANF data collection responsibilities.

[Asha Shah](#), Director

FIA Administration on Budget, Analysis & Financial Management, Lansing

■ Norton replaces Steve Hilker, who left FIA for another state agency.

Executive Council is a group of 19 Family Independence Agency executives.



FIA Icon

*a publication of Michigan
Family Independence Agency*

John Engler, Governor

Douglas E. Howard, Director

Family Independence Agency

Karen Smith, Director

Office of Communications

Larry VanDeSande, Editor



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Budget, Analysis

and Financial Management

From the Director

By Douglas E. Howard

Director, Family Independence Agency



Celebrating excellence in the FIA

I set goals in life to work hard, have fun and celebrate success. I spent time doing all three at the June 27-28 Statewide Directors Meeting in Lansing. The occasion was a time to recognize 20 Family Independence Agency employees for their outstanding work performance and community involvement, and to recognize other employees for various achievements.

The Director's Recognition Program is an effort to give special acknowledgment to exemplary employees throughout the FIA. In three years this program has become a mantle for exceptional performance in our agency. This year's award winners represent the best in our agency and symbolize the good work of their friends and coworkers in FIA offices around the state. They represent the toil and dedication all employees make helping the FIA fulfill its vision to be a national leader in human services delivery, and in fulfilling our mission to improve the quality of life for customers of our services.

Other employees and FIA offices received special awards June 28. In addition to regular Project Zero citations for the seven counties that recently hit "zero" for the first time, 22 county directors or district office managers received awards on behalf of their staff for Diversity Awareness Week activities. The FIA Child and Family Services Administration presented Peer Review Awards to eight county directors on behalf of their staff. And staff from the Michigan Disability Determination Service were lauded for federal awards they received (you read about them in the July 2001 FIA Icon). Nine FIA employees were presented with 25 or 30 year services awards.

Christopher Stabile of Chippewa County FIA was recognized for being named Social Worker of the Year by the Michigan Foster and Adoptive Parent Association and Christine Ullmann from the FIA Central Office accounting section was cited for her nomination for the Government Financial Manager of the Year Award by the Greater Lansing chapter, Association of Government Accountants.

These commendations represent excellence from people all over the FIA. Our continued success in delivering services and managing resources in the future depends on how well we meet our professional challenges today and in the future. Working together, I am confident we will continue doing an excellent job providing services to Michigan citizens.

Director's Recognition Program Recipients

Joe Bagby

Wilderness Instructor at Nokomis Challenge Center, Prudenville

Nominated by Kate Hanley, Director, Nokomis Challenge Center



Joe has been with the FIA since September 1990. In his position he leads hikes and camps with groups of adjudicated state wards at Nokomis Challenge Center, a juvenile justice facility. Joe is dedicated to helping young people learn to believe in themselves, their abilities. He is very flexible. He took a voluntary change of job and worked in-house to fill a temporary vacancy. He is always learning – earned a master's degree in social work while working full time. Joe is a world traveler interested in global issues like poverty and injustice. His professionalism, energy, enthusiasm and good humor deserve recognition.

Michael Binkley

Director of End User Computing for the FIA in Lansing Central Office

Nominated by John Blanchard, FIA Deputy Chief Information Officer



Mike has been an FIA employee for 28 years. He started in the mailroom and worked his way up. Mike is very "user" oriented. He works with multiple vendors and organizations to accommodate staff's hardware and software needs. He promotes training, explains new products and programs and developed an End User Computing "User Guide". He developed the End User Computing Division in the Information Technology and Management Services Administration from ground zero. His dedication to the agency's objectives merits special recognition.

Denise Chambers

Director of Genesee County FIA, Flint

Nominated by Doug Williams, Deputy Director, Genesee County FIA and Jim Nye, Director, FIA Outstate Operations and several staff members from Genesee County FIA



Denise has worked for FIA for 20 years as an AP worker, supervisor and program section manager, Children Services section manager, and district manager. She is an outstanding administrator whose skills and experience have helped her gain the respect and admiration of staff. Denise models the theory that hard work breeds success and her hard work is rarely for her own benefit. From the moment she arrived in Genesee County she has engaged everyone she has come in contact with one primary mission—to improve the quality of life for the customers we serve. Denise listens to employees, customers and the community and authorized formation of a forum for staff to develop and present proposals for work process change. Denise has been a pioneer for the agency who believes the FIA can be the people's choice.

John Davis

Child Protective Services worker for Kent County FIA, Grand Rapids
Nominated by Paul Cartwright, CPS Section Manager, Kent County FIA



John has worked for FIA for 21 years. He began his career as a Basic Family Services worker and has also worked in Adult Services. John has done an outstanding job as a CPS worker. He is enthusiastic about his work and remains in CPS because he feels his position allows him to make the greatest impact on children's lives. He is a role model for other CPS workers and is always willing to assist new workers with learning their job. John often volunteers to take on the more difficult cases and also helps workers with on-call duties. He is well respected by local police, private agencies, court personnel and Circuit Court Judges. John is on the board of the Ridge Park Charter Academy and has held many positions within his church. John credits his wife and two sons, whose support make it possible for him to perform his job to the best of his abilities.

Karen Dennis

Departmental Analyst, Wayne County FIA Forest-Ellery District, Detroit
Nominated by Georgia Cambell, Forest-Ellery District Manager



Karen has worked for the FIA for two years. Her work performance frequently exceeds outstanding and she is an integral member of the Forest-Ellery management team. She judiciously carries out assignments without direction and excels in developing innovative plans and solutions to district concerns. She fulfills the agency mission while handling responsibilities including internal control, fiscal, personnel, management, communications and training. She is an exemplary team player who often goes beyond the call of duty. Karen developed a customer concern tracking format, initiated activities to improve payment accuracy and serves on many committees. Karen volunteers at a local school tutoring and mentoring children and provides counseling and mentoring to teen mothers at St. Vincent's and at the Sarah Fisher Center for Children.

Dennis Fleck

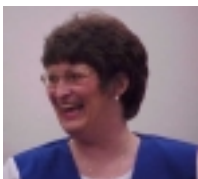
Family Independence Manager
Alger County FIA, Munising
Nominated by FIS Judy Zamarron, Tari Johnson
& Sherri Rasmussen of Alger County FIA



Dennis has worked for the FIA for 26 years. He previously held positions as a Volunteer Services coordinator, office manager, AP supervisor and the acting director for both Alger and Schoolcraft counties. He is an outstanding supervisor who demonstrates exemplary performance. When you request his assistance you are confident he will provide accurate information and do everything possible to fill your request. Dennis is a strong leader who lets his staff know he cares about them personally as well as professionally. He serves on numerous community boards and is always willing to help out. Dennis set up the food pantry in Alger and Schoolcraft counties and one Christmas, he picked up and delivered a Christmas tree to a customer in his own vehicle. He is cheerful, easy to talk to and a person who gets things done.

Kathy Gutting

Administrative Secretary, Clare County FIA, Harrison
Nominated by Denise Neff, FIS from Clare County FIA



Kathy has been with the FIA for 21 years. Kathy is very dependable and always ready to provide her expertise. Her regular duties include distribution of reports, contract payments, leave and attendance reports and records, telephone and voice mail systems and taking minutes for staff and board meetings. Another of her duties includes processing payroll. She has been known on more than one occasion to schedule her annual leave around the payroll schedule. In addition to her regular duties, Kathy is a member of our Teaming for Excellence Committee. She organizes special employee events such as "Feel Like a Million" and Affirmative Action Week activities. In addition, she is the secretary for the Clare County Community Foundation. She actively seeks donations for the organization and makes suggestions for the disbursement of their funds.

Director's Recognition Program Recipients

Reada Johnson

FIA Zone VIII Manager, Wayne County

Nominated by Jerome Rutland, Director, Wayne County FIA, Detroit

Reada has been an FIA employee since July 15, 1973. She started as a Social Services trainee and worked her way up. She handles projects with self-confidence, authority and enthusiasm and has demonstrated administrative competence in various roles. Her ability to handle difficult assignments has gained the respect of staff and peers. Her contributions as a team player with the ability to excel merit special recognition.



Minnie Joyce

Family Independence Manager, Wayne County FIA Fullerton-Jeffries District, Detroit

Nominated by Diane Schafer, Program Manager, Fullerton-Jeffries District

Minnie has been with the FIA for 27 years. She is extremely knowledgeable of FIA policies and procedures and shares her knowledge with staff through regular meetings and an open door policy. Minnie demonstrates excellence in her overall job performance. The quality and quantity of her work is evident thorough case readings and staff productivity. She is a team player who willingly volunteers for special projects and coverage for absent employees. Minnie is liaison to Detroit Entrepreneurial Institute and periodically assists in their orientation sessions for new enrollees. She meets regularly with Work First contractors, helping with problem resolution and clarifying FIA policy. Minnie regularly participates in the Goodfellow Doll and The Salvation Army Dress-A-Bear program, volunteers annually for the March of Dimes Walk America, and is involved in the Girl Scout program.



Laura Linebaugh

Senior Executive Management Assistant to the FIA Director in Lansing

Nominated by Jocelyn Vanda, Acting Director, Office of Special Services and Sidonie Squier, Senior Policy Advisor, Director's Office, Lansing



Laura has been an FIA employee for 27 years. She was previously secretary to the Office of Communications and the Chief Information Officer. In a very demanding position, she clearly demonstrates grace under pressure and calm in the eye of the storm. Laura carries out her duties with integrity, trustworthiness and good humor. She treats customers with dignity and respect and is an excellent team player with administrative support staff. Laura gives to the community through volunteer activities including Caring About Kids and Meals on Wheels. She is not judgmental and comfortable in her own skin. For her many outstanding qualities, Laura clearly deserves this honor.

Kenneth Malkowski

Capital Outlay and Emergency Management Coordinator, FIA Bureau of Administrative Services, Lansing

Nominated by James Kasprzak, FIA Administrative Services Director



Ken has been an FIA employee for 10 years. He is a key player in helping complex projects get completed on schedule and within budget. Ken is able to bring disparate parties together to solve complex problems. He is currently overseeing the \$37.6 million construction project at the W. J. Maxey Training School and the Individual and Family Grant Program for the Wayne County flooding disaster relief. Ken anticipates potential problems and solves them before they crop up. He consistently works overtime without being asked and without additional compensation. Because of his professionalism and dedication to the agency and the people he works with, this award is a highly appropriate tribute.

Jacqueline McQueen

Family Independence Specialist at Wayne County FIA Greydale District, Detroit
Nominated by Donald Mussen, Greydale District Manager



Jacqueline has worked at FIA for 26 years. Jacqueline is a team player with a strong customer focus. She routinely volunteers for roles and duties that help her provide quality service. Jacqueline volunteered to be one of 10 Family Independence Prevention Specialists as part of our prevention pilot. In that capacity she sought out community resources and engaged customers in the assessment and service planning process. Jacqueline served as the UAW Chief Steward at Greydale, advocating for issues of concern to coworkers and working in partnership with district management to resolve those concerns. Her respectful and caring treatment of agency customers enhances her effectiveness. She delivers food to seniors as part of Focus Hope, co-captained the district's "Paint the Town" team, is the Goodfellow's doll coordinator, participated in the Walk Against Homelessness and the Breast Cancer Walk-A-Thon.

Bill Memberto

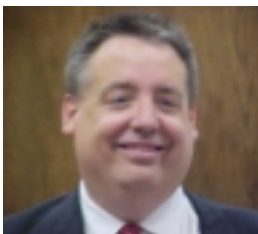
Director of the Wayne County Office of Urban Indian Affairs, Detroit
Nominated by Lynn Neavill, Wayne County FIA District Manager



Bill has been an FIA employee for four years. In his position he represents concerns of off-reservation Native Americans. He sits on three subcommittees as a member of the Tribal State Partnership and was instrumental in developing the FIA Indian Child Welfare Act manual policy. Bill is a member of the Social Work Advisory Committee at Marygrove College and is passionate about his work and his heritage. Bill is a member of the Little River Band of Ottawa Indians in Manistee. As a great communicator and bridge builder, he deserves to be honored.

Gary Miller

Food Stamp Payment Accuracy Specialist, FIA Central Office, Lansing
Nominated by Sue Hall, Director, FIA Medicaid and Food Stamps Program, Lansing



Gary has been an agency employee for 24 years and performs a very difficult high level job. He staffs the Payment Accuracy Achievement Team and coordinates the Payment Accuracy Council. Gary provides significant input to the Big 14 Counties and is a frequent presenter at national conferences. He chaired the 2000 Big Ten Payment Accuracy Conference and annually lectures about federal food programs at his local community college. He was accepted as a fellow in the 2000-01 Michigan Education Policy Fellowship Program. His dedicated and dynamic performance makes him an appropriate recipient of this award

Director's Recognition Program Recipients

Barbara Mitchell

Home Aide for Newaygo County FIA, Newaygo

Nominated by Dawn Bushouse, Volunteer Services Coordinator, Newaygo County FIA



Barbara has worked for the FIA for 24 years. She is a tireless advocate for the poor and will stop at nothing in her attempts to help our customers. Barbara empowers people, gives them hope and encourages them to achieve. She stands up for people who have been wronged and convinces people with authority to do what is right for low-income individuals. Time clocks and work hours are unimportant to Barbara. What needs to get done gets done. She is an excellent mentor and customers trust her so implicitly she has been asked to be a birth coach at deliveries and even a godmother and guardian. Barbara is an amazing fundraiser and very creative problem solver.

Because of her wonderful experiences with customers she has been able to recruit many people from all walks of life to help the people we serve. Barbara's example encourages all of us to be better people.

Linda Penney

Executive Secretary for the FIA Zone 2 Office, Traverse City

Nominated by the entire Zone 2 Office staff



Linda has been with FIA for more than 28 years as a typist clerk, department analyst trainee and secretary. She also functions as office manager, facility manager and fiscal manager. Linda is one of the rare employees whose activities are not limited by her job description or classification—if something needs doing, Linda sees that it is done. She models customer service excellence in her role providing administrative support to Zone 2. She is pleasant, professional, respectful and extremely organized, has excellent problem solving skills and is a very hard worker. Linda is very active in her community. She has worked as a National Cherry Festival volunteer for a number of years

and works with the St. Francis alumni group. She is representative of the best in our agency and is the best kind of person to be around as a co-worker or friend

Melinda Thompson

Family Independence Specialist for Ingham County FIA, Lansing

Nominated by Karen Wanek, Family Independence Specialist, Ingham County FIA



Melinda has worked at FIA for 11 years. She exceeds expectations on standards of promptness while often taking the time to help many coworkers. She also assists new employees by correctly answering questions and providing encouragement and motivation. Melinda is efficient and always provides excellent customer service. She is organized and extremely knowledgeable about all of her cases. In addition, both she and her husband stay active in the community by volunteering at their children's day care center.

Vicki Wallace-Oliver

**Kalamazoo District Office Manager, Michigan Disability Determination Service
Nominated by Cheryl Barea, Disability Examiner, Disability Determination Service**



Vicki has been an employee with the Disability Determination Service for over 20 years. She consistently demonstrates hard work and effort beyond the scope of her job. She assists examiners without prompting and always goes the extra mile. Vicki is highly knowledgeable about rules and regulations regarding Social Security claims. As a manager she is consistent and fair with everyone in her district. Her professionalism, courtesy and commitment warrant this recognition.

Kurt Warner

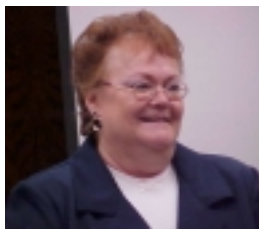
**Human Resource Specialist in FIA Central Office, Lansing
Nominated by Larry Miesner, Director, FIA Office of Juvenile Justice, Lansing**



Kurt has been an FIA employee 23 years and is a former labor relations specialist. He consistently demonstrates excellence in all areas of job performance, provides prompt and thorough service to his customers and displays extensive knowledge and professionalism. Kurt is sensitive to the need of others, adjusts his schedule to meet with late shift staff, and makes needed accommodations for his customers. He works well with other agencies and community entities and his value to the Office of Juvenile Justice is immense. He is an outstanding representative of FIA who richly deserves this honor.

Sue Wilson

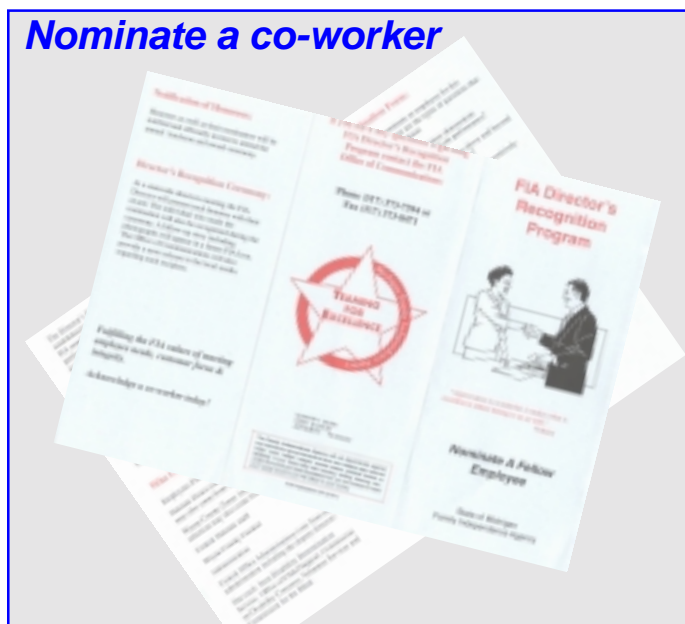
**Administrative Support to the Director of Client Services,
Michigan Commission for the Blind, Lansing
Nominated by James Buscetta, Michigan Commission for
the Blind Client Services Director**



Sue has been a member of the commission staff since May 1983. She is always willing to assist field staff in resolving problems, is knowledgeable of state policies and procedures, provides helpful referrals and is a team player who helps others do their jobs. Sue puts

in extra time to meet deadlines and get jobs done. She took an active role in the Michigan Commission for the Blind "Vision 20/20" project. Her diligence, enthusiasm and good humor make her deserving of this recognition.

Nominate a co-worker



In memory of Lisa Putman

FIA employee donates puppy for wonderful cause in memory of co-worker “Trey” now a Paws With a Cause® assistance dog doing good work

From Angie Jenerette, Director
Monroe County Family Independence Agency, Monroe
Telephone (734) 243-7204

Enclosed is a letter and picture I received. **Diane Masserant** works in the fiscal unit of Monroe County FIA as a calculations assistant. She has extensive experience raising and showing Labrador retrievers for many years.

Diane wanted to do something personal when she heard the bad news of Lisa Putman's death. She donated a puppy, Trey, in memory of Lisa Putman. Trey has graduated and is ready to help his new partner live a life of enhanced independence. This is a great reward due to the fact that not all dogs that begin the program make it through graduation.

This is such an honor for Diane and her dogs and we are proud of her. Thank you, Diane, for your generosity and support.

Here is the text of a letter from Lynn Hoekstra, Southeastern Michigan regional director for Paws With a Cause®:

■ ■ ■

Back in 1999, Diane Masserant donated a Labrador retriever puppy to Paws With a Cause® in memory of Ms. Lisa Putman. We were greatly honored to be chosen for this donation. The puppy, named Trey, began his journey with PAWS® as a foster puppy that was lovingly raised by a volunteer family in our community. As we watched Trey grow, we could see all the potential he had to carry on in Ms. Putman's memory and to bring “the gift of independence” to a person with a disability who needed his help.

Trey was an excellent student right from the beginning and we are proud to report that he has completed his advanced training at the National Training Center and is now a PAWS Assistance Dog. The enclosed photo was taken at the time of his graduation. Trey now has a lifelong partner and together they will continue on a journey to enhance independence with mutual love and respect.

Assistance dogs such as Trey are made possible because people in the community care. The support PAWS receives from breeders brings new puppies to us. The kindness and generosity of donors who support PAWS through United Way and other avenues, makes it possible for those puppies to complete their training and be matched to a partner who can now fulfill their dream of greater independence.

The donations we received in honor of Lisa Putman are a wonderful tribute to her memory and to the help, she too, gave to people in need. Once again, thank you so much for your generosity and support.

Sincerely,

Lynn Hoekstra
SE Michigan Regional Director

■ For more information on Paws With a Cause® call (800) 253-PAWS (TDD/V) or see their website: www.pawswithacause.org



FIA funds new post-adoption services

Three regional contractors awarded three-year grants

Three more grantees to be selected this summer

The FIA awarded grants in June totaling \$248,546 to support post-adoption services in three regions—the Upper Peninsula, a populous four-county West Michigan region, and a seven-county region from the Thumb to Macomb County.

The grants were awarded to three regional service providers. They replace earlier funding from the FIA to provide services to adoptive families in Michigan. The FIA made grant awards in a competitive program based on input from adoptive families. Grants beginning June 1 and running for three years were awarded to these agencies:

Child and Family Services of the Upper Peninsula, Inc., Marquette

Telephone (877) 826-4960 or call 228-4015 locally

Contact: Nancy Pennell

Grant amount: \$83,333

Estimated service group: 960

Counties served: Gogebic, Ontonagon, Houghton, Keweenaw, Baraga, Iron, Marquette, Dickinson, Menominee, Alger, Delta, Schoolcraft, Luce, Mackinac and Chippewa.

Catholic Services of Macomb, Clinton Township

Telephone (810) 416-2300

Contact: Mary Wade

Grant amount: \$83,331

Estimated service group: 2,382

Counties served: Huron, Tuscola, Sanilac, Genesee, Lapeer, St. Clair and Macomb.

Catholic Social Services of Muskegon

Telephone (866) 968-7411

Contact: Pam Cohn

Grant amount: \$81,900

Estimated service group: 2,339

Counties served: Muskegon, Ottawa, Kent, Allegan.

The FIA expects to fund three more regional contracts for similar services this summer for the southern, central and northern Lower Peninsula. Post-adoption services are currently being provided in Oakland and Wayne counties through contracts that will continue into 2002. Four sets of services will be made available to adoptive families through each regional provider including:

- Coordination of community services, where the regional contractor helps families apply for local services in or near their community.
- Information and referral services.
- Development of community-based support services such as support groups and community events.
- Crisis intervention services for families with no other resources.

Eligible families must be Michigan residents who have a child or children that were state wards with finalized adoptions who is/are less than age 18. The child(ren) must have been adopted from foster care in Michigan or another state and they must be receiving or eligible to receive a state adoption subsidy from Michigan or another state. Michigan provides about 18,500 adoption subsidies to families that adopted minor children from foster care. The subsidy amount is about \$640 a month and is intended to support the family's needs for services to special needs children.

For more information on services to be provided, call the local contact person.

Children's Corners

Dual county FIA upgrades children's areas in Cheboygan and Mackinac counties

By Lisa Mleczewski, Project Zero Coordinator
Cheboygan-Mackinac Family Independence Agency
Telephone (231) 627-8504
mleczewskil@state.mi.us

With help from staff on both sides of the Mackinac Bridge and members of each community, our new Children's Corners in Cheboygan and Mackinac counties began serving children this year.

The Children's Corners are a wonderful reflection of collaborative efforts and we are very proud of our accomplishment. Mem-

bers of both communities contributed to the effort including juveniles sentenced to community participation by the Probate Court along with a local faith-based youth group.

In addition, an FIA volunteer, local art students and the 4C child care specialist (representing both Northeast Regional 4C and Upper Peninsula 4C) lent their creative talents to this endeavor.

"That's terrific having a place for kids," a customer waiting for her appointment in Cheboygan recently told me. "It looks like fun! If I were a kid, I don't think I'd want to leave."

We extend heartfelt thanks to everyone who contributed to this worthwhile project!



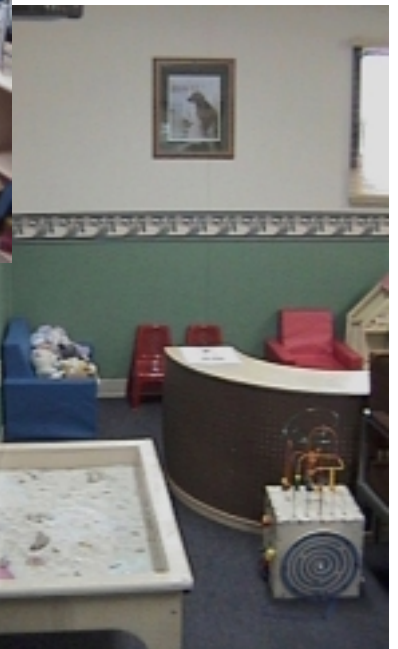
Cheboygan County Children's Corner before (above) and (clockwise) after changes. In bottom photo, FIA director Ken DesArmo leaves a handprint in Cheboygan.

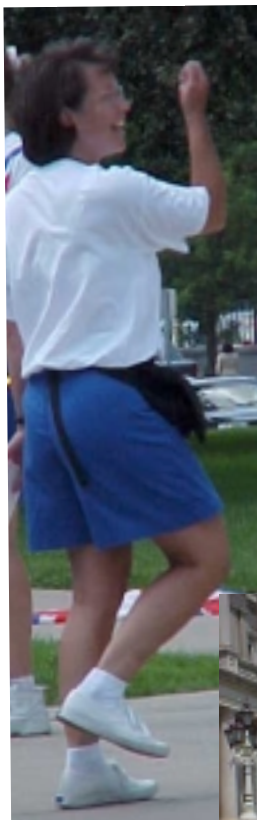


Children's Corner provides a place for kids when their parents come to the FIA office.



Pictured right and above: Mackinac County Children's Corner before and after the alterations in St. Ignace.





Adrian Drum and Flags Corps at Capitol

Program builds confidence, self-esteem in participants

The Adrian Training School Drum and Flags Corps visited the state Capitol in Lansing June 25, where they performed a 25-minute routine.

Now in its 10th season at the Adrian Training School, the corps is comprised of ATS residents. The focus is on building self-esteem, teaching discipline, facilitating team work and community reintegration. The group also performs in Adrian-area parades, festivals, fairs and community functions throughout Lenawee and neighboring counties.

Angela Johnston (pictured left) and Galena Reiter-Thomson direct the corps.

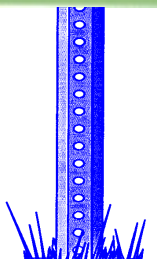
Located in the Lenawee County seat, Adrian Training School is a residential juvenile justice facility administered by the Family Independence Agency. It provides treatment, rehabilitation and community reintegration services for adjudicated felons age 18 and younger. It has capacity to serve 120 youth, 60 males and 60 females.

The ATS Corps makes their springtime trip to the state Capitol most years.



Thank You!

This billboard appeared around Michigan during June to say "Thanks!" to foster parents for their love, generosity and kindness.



Six Weeks to Wellness—Livingston County Style

By Nancy Vicknair

Livingston County Family Independence Agency, Howell

Telephone (517) 548-0219

HOWELL—The arrival of the new acting director Peggy Tiemann seemed like the perfect opportunity for Livingston County to launch an aggressive Six Weeks to Wellness (6W2W) campaign.

The stress of change coupled with the exciting opportunities of growth provided the perfect marketing tools. Recruitment efforts resulted in a dramatic increase over previous years with over 80 percent of staff signing up to participate, with 100 percent participation in both services and management staff.

Weekly news kept the campaign in focus. Information was circulated ranging from updates on the campaign and raffles to foods that help reduce pain, the best time to take vitamins, how to recognize and reduce stress, exercise tips, and aromatherapy.

Interesting trivial bits of health-related information were also included. For example, did you know the amount of nicotine the average pack-a-day-smoker inhales in a week would kill a person instantly if it were taken all at once?

Tips were posted in bathrooms on the importance of drinking water contained the following facts:

- For 37 percent of Americans, the thirst mechanism is so weak it is often mistaken for hunger.
- Some 75 percent of Americans are chronically dehydrated.
- Even mild dehydration will slow down one's metabolism as much as 3 percent.
- Lack of water is the number one cause of daytime fatigue.
- Preliminary research indicates that drinking eight to ten glasses of water per day significantly eases back and joint pain for up to 80 percent of sufferers.
- A mere 2 percent drop in body water can trigger fuzzy short-term memory, trouble with basic math and difficulty focusing on the computer screen or a printed page.
- Drinking five glasses of water daily decreases the risk of colon cancer by 45 percent, the risk of bladder cancer by 50 percent and the risk of breast cancer by 79 percent.

The tips were so popular that occasionally staff would make copies to take home to their spouses. It was particularly encouraging that even the 20 percent that did not wish to participate in 6W2W began commenting positively on the health tips. Some even brought in articles to be used for the health tips or newsletter.

Friday's Tips were inspirational messages to encourage self-growth and positive self-esteem. On Fridays, staff members were also given a weekly guided imagery meditation to help them learn to relax and reduce stress.

Food played an important role during the campaign, which kicked off with a glass of orange juice on "Get a Running Start with O.J. Day". There were also healthy muffins on "Muffin Monday" and fresh fruit on "Tooty-Fruity Thursday". "Tasty Tuesday" was a healthy potluck. A fresh fruit salad was provided at the awards ceremony.

During the campaign, Livingston County earned 5,568 points and walked a combined total of 230 miles. Kathy Smith became the first recipient of the local traveling High Points Champion trophy for earning 353 points. Howard Majtyka finished second with 351 points. Both Kathy and Howard received a gift basket for their efforts.

Carol Davis won a teddy bear for guessing how many miles would be walked during the campaign. The winner of the grand prize, a tabletop relaxation fountain, was drawn from all completed 6W2W reports. It was won by Mark Perkins.

But the real benefits from the 6W2W campaign are healthy habits that were formed and are now part of our lifestyle. Staff are drinking more water than ever before. Even more encouraging is the fact that one employee completely quit smoking.

6W2W was fun, healthy and a good example of the caring and commitment FIA has for its internal customers.



Howard Majtyka and Kathy Smith with their prizes.

Safety Week Hits Western Wayne CFS

Wayne County FIA services district celebrates agency's first "Safety Week"

By Traci Lee-Brown, Child Protective Services Supervisor
Western Wayne Child and Family Services, Taylor

TAYLOR—The week of May 21-25 marked the Family Independence Agency's first statewide recognition of Safety Week. The Wayne County Western Wayne Child and Family Service District planned several events and activities for the week designed to heighten safety awareness in the office, the field and in the home for all employees. CFS events and activities were planned by a group including Diane Bowyer, Child Protective Services supervisor; Ruth Barrese, juvenile justice supervisor; and Juanita James, administrative services manager, and me. CFS employees participated in events and a fun week of safety was had by all. The events for the week were as follows:

Monday: Marked Safety Week kickoff with an infant-child safety seat demonstration by Renee Ramos of AAA of Michigan. She showed employees how to properly install the seats and provided information on how to get the installation checked at local AAA office checkpoints. Ramos also reviewed the laws regarding child seat safety

and went to a couple of employee vehicles to see if their seats were installed properly. Monday also marked the beginning of our "safety hunt". Employees were given a list of things to find within the building, such as fire extinguishers, smoke detectors, members of the Rapid Response team, etc. The first employee to turn in the correct answers any time that week would receive a prize.

Tuesday: Clerical supervisor Renee DiCristifario gave a Power Point presentation she created on what to do when in an accident in a state vehicle. Her presentation included a role-play by Travon Howard and LaMeda Ritchie—a pair of Motor Pool employees—on what *not* to do in an accident. DiCristifario gave other tips for safety when using state vehicles.

Wednesday: Workers were asked to participate in a roundtable discussion of what safety tips they would pass on to others, especially new workers. There were handouts regarding safety in the field including deescalating angry teenagers and what to be on guard for in a home call.

Thursday: Employees were given a word search and crossword puzzle relating to safety. These were done for fun and to put safety issues and topics on their minds in the course of their day.

Friday: We had a Casual Day-Memorial Day kickoff where we reminded everyone to be safe over the holiday weekend, especially on the road. This was also the day we announced our "safety hunt" winner. Raquel Young of the Western Wayne CFS clerical staff was honored for her submission and was presented with a \$10 gift certificate to Applebee's Restaurant.

PLAYING IT SAFE
by Jack H. Goodrich



ACROSS

- 3. I've lived with
- 4. Based on eight
- 5. Ham it up
- 6. Cheer for the
- 7. Sports palace
- 8. Part of U.S. N.A.
- 9. Lamb portion
- 10. SAFE
- 11. Duds
- 12. Bean type
- 13. CD
- 14. Like a dead
- 15. St Patrick's Day
- 16. Sleek materials
- 17. Pasta type
- 18. Andean beast
- 19. Puerto Rico city
- 20. Get 100 on
- 21. Farm unit
- 22. Anchor part
- 23. Urban misadventure

- 39. Captain's record
- 40. Falls heavily
- 41. Island
- 42. Nullified
- 43. Tea cakes
- 44. Heavenly fireballs
- 45. Easy, for one
- 46. Miss Piggy's exclamation
- 47. ___ of a kind
- 48. "March Madness"
- 49. grip
- 50. SAFE
- 51. ___ gone
- 52. Charter away
- 53. Much, to a musician
- 54. Actress
- 55. Thompson
- 56. Stood with
- 57. It may be purple
- 58. Author Deighton

- 4. Strength standard
- 5. Emergency
- 6. Morise partner
- 7. Opie's pa
- 8. Cambodian neighbor
- 9. Devour greedily
- 10. Kenyan terrorist
- 11. Breakfast order for hero?
- 12. Old salt
- 13. Days of yore
- 14. Where Celine is
- 15. Goofy stuff
- 16. Santa
- 17. Clove-scented flowers
- 18. Turn into dots and dashes
- 19. Military blockades
- 20. Event for Picabo Street
- 21. Seduced bower
- 22. Jeweler's glass
- 23. Trudges along

- 37. Red-faced
- 38. Like a naked sheep
- 39. Did an editor's job
- 40. Former owner of NBC
- 41. Couch potato's need
- 42. Words with bread and meat
- 43. Yankee, to Pedro
- 44. ___ about
- 45. approximately
- 46. Out of the wind
- 47. Actor Hale
- 48. Wife of Saturn
- 49. Mentalist Geller
- 50. Little bit
- 51. A bit of current
- 52. Wides opponent

DOWN

- 1. Threaded fastener
- 2. Vegetable spread
- 3. SAFE

PLAYING IT SAFE



A partially-completed
Safety Week crossword
puzzle and solution. No
cheating!

Blind man's success at "Jeopardy" and in life proves inspirational

Eddie Timanus visits Michigan as guest of Michigan Commission for the Blind

By Barbara Walters
Kalamazoo Gazette
www.mlive.com

■ FIA Icon contributed original material to this story, published online June 26 through MICHIGAN LIVE.

Eddie Timanus loves games. He wows the crowd at Las Vegas, won almost \$70,000 and two cars on the television game show "Jeopardy", and is a sportswriter for USA Today.

Not bad for a blind guy.

Eddie walked away from his five championships on television's "Jeopardy" with \$69,700 and two Chevy Camaros. "Of course, I don't drive," he said.

But in the game show world, contestants whose timing and intellect aren't razor sharp are the ones with the handicap

"Lemme tell you, that's some buzzer. The buzzer is the key, and getting the timing right," said Timanus, who visited the Michigan Commission for the Blind training center in Kalamazoo June 25 to meet with college-bound students.

Timanus, a graduate of Wake Forest University in North Carolina, was a guest of Michigan Commission for the Blind (MCB) in June. He spoke to the Michigan Youth Leadership Conference in East Lansing June 25—a leadership development program for high school students with disabilities organized by Michigan Commission on Disability Concerns—and visited the MCB Training School in Kalamazoo the next day.

"He views himself as a regular guy who just happens to be blind," said Patrick Cannon, director of Michigan Commission for the Blind. MCB brought him to Michigan as a successful role model for people with disabilities.

Timanus has been featured in People magazine and is in demand for visits across the nation since his wit and memory made him one of the most popular winners in the history of "Jeopardy".

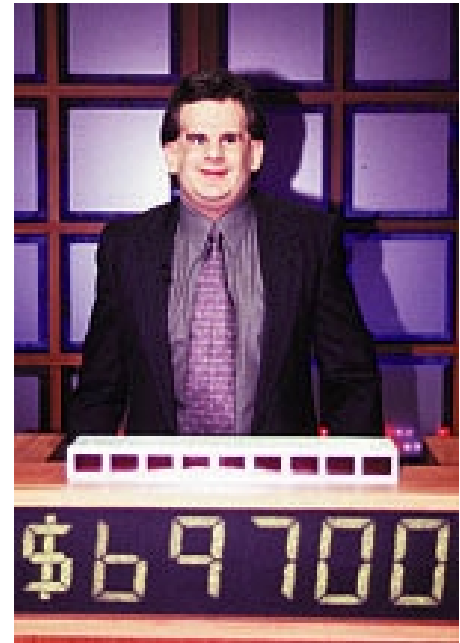
Blind since age 3, the 32-year-old's success came without any special concessions other than for the show to provide him with a list of categories in Braille.

"Accommodation is a lot different from a concession," he said to MCB Training School students. "Accommodation puts you on equal terms. It's not something that gives you an extra advantage."

Timanus has a voice system on his computer at his USA Today Washington, D.C. area office, where he writes the paper's weekly "top 25 poll" based on the rankings of college coaches. His father, former radio announcer Chuck Timanus, accompanies him as a play-by-play commentator to the few games he actually covers.

It was listening to games on the radio—often his father's voice—which provided the vivid images and fired his passion for sports. Sports are not his only passion, however.

A poker player who uses his memory instead of sight to impress the crowd in Las Vegas, Timanus is a self-described "game freak" who as a child used to sit in front of the TV with his mother while "Jeopardy" was on.



Eddie Timanus on Jeopardy

continues next page

Blind man's success proves inspirational from previous page

Terri Timanus never treated Eddie's blindness as a tragedy. When they learned early in his life that he'd lose his sight to a type of tumorous cancer of the retina she stuck Braille letters onto wooden blocks. He attended a school for the blind through eighth grade, then entered the Fairfax, Va. public schools. In high school his high SAT scores generated many scholarship offers. He chose Wake Forest.

"I wasn't looking for a school that would bend over backward for me, but one that would be aware," said Timanus. He graduated from Wake Forest with a degree in economics. Braille tests were supplied, but Timanus took his own notes.

Asked Monday by someone with sight what was the "toughest challenge" to becoming a college graduate that he had to overcome, he paused uncharacteristically before answering.

"I never thought about anything in those terms," said Timanus. "It's not an adjustment for me to be blind. It's who I am."

Timanus went through four tryout sessions and passed a 50-question written test to get on "Jeopardy." Taped over a two-day period in Los Angeles in fall of 1999, the five shows on which he appeared still are among the show's most popular re-runs. As a five-time champion, he was invited back to the "Tournament of Champions."

"I did not set out to become a spokesman for blind people by being on 'Jeopardy,'" Timanus said. "I was happy to be anonymous. But I'm not getting tired of the recognition."

"I'm willing to talk to people, to say that blindness is an inconvenience but it doesn't have to stop you."

For more about Eddie Timanus, enter his name in any Internet search engine. His iCan personal profile can be found at: http://mercury.web-hosting.com/~icanweb/discovery/role_models/timanus.html

For more information on Michigan Commission for the Blind or Michigan Commission on Disability Concerns—agencies administered through the FIA—see the FIA website: www.mfia.state.mi.us

Exercise combats depression & heart disease

■ A message from the State of Michigan Employee Service Program.

Over the years, evidence has been mounting that there is a link between depression and heart disease. Research shows people who suffer from depression have faster heartbeats, irregular heart rhythms and higher blood pressure, all of which can contribute to heart attacks and heart disease.

One estimate is that approximately half of all patients with heart disease experience major depression at some point in their lives, with symptoms such as sadness, loss of energy, sleep difficulties, social withdrawal and difficulty functioning at work.

A study, quoted by J. P. Matthews in the Heart Information Network, reported that exercise has beneficial effects on blood pressure and heart functioning. In 2000, another study at Duke University suggested that exercise helps people recover from depression. In this study, the people who exercised regularly had greater improvement in their depressive symptoms than the people who did not exercise.

Depression and heart disease are both treatable illnesses and improvement in one might very well lead to improvement in the other. If you are concerned about either or both conditions, exercise could be an important part of the treatment picture. Before beginning any exercise program, it is of course vital to consult your doctor. It could also be very helpful to have some further information about depression and how it may be affecting you.

One way to do this is to utilize the free and anonymous Depression and Alcohol Screening Program, offered by the State of Michigan's Employee Service Program. You may call **1-800-887-5676**, 24 hours per day, 365 days per year. You will receive immediate results you can use to help you and your doctor decide if you would benefit from further evaluation and treatment.

For more information contact the Employee Service Program in Lansing at (800) 521-1377. Locally please call 373-7630. In Detroit call (800) 872-5563 or 256-3619. The Employee Service Program is administered through the Office of State Employer.